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usually paid to them by the month, fortnight, or week. The wages very seldom exceeds eight or nine shillings per week, often only six or seven; and for this small sum, he is almost constantly exposed to the extremes of all weathers, save when thrown idle by the inclemency of the season; a circumstance that occasionally happens, and adds not a little to his distress. Such is his real state as to working, and we shall now examine his other comforts. Through all seasons, he is scarcely half clothed, the want of which is often severely felt during winter; and his family, if he have children, are commonly literally naked; and their colour, by the smoke and soot of the cabin, (often it would be more proper to call it *hovel*;) turned to what may be justly termed a *Hottentot hue*. In such a state, which certainly may be justly termed wretchedness, his children rarely receive any education, not being enabled to send them to school: but as soon as able, they are put out to work with strangers, who seldom trouble themselves about their learning; hence it may be truly said, that poverty "freezes the genial current of the soul."

Such is the actual situation of many thousands in this country, (Ulster); and in the other provinces of this

kingdom the state of the labouring poor is much worse; from their very low wages, and the numerous oppressions exercised upon them by their superiors, by several intelligent travellers they are represented, and probably with justice, as the most wretched peasantry in Europe. Though in this state of almost consummate misery, some vices of the great folks of this world are doubtless restrained, yet others, at least equally destructive to society, as the luxury of the higher classes, are often very conspicuous among the lower orders, the origin of which are ignorance and poverty; so, if we consider the matter impartially, we must conclude those authors to have been more than commonly stupid, who have asserted the lower classes of society to be so very virtuous, and so very happy. To conclude, we may safely affirm, that most people now deem such situations as the two last mentioned, incompatible with true happiness, and would really prefer luxury, with all its evils:—if not, we must suppose, the more poverty and ignorance, the greater happiness, and, hence, that degraded nation, the *Hottentots*, the happiest people who inhabit this globe.

ALEXIS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

ACCOUNT OF HENRY PESTALOZZI, AND HIS METHOD OF INSTRUCTION; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE INTERROGATIVE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION, LATELY INTRODUCED INTO SOME ACADEMIES IN LONDON.

THE department of Biographical Sketches of distinguished persons has hitherto been exclusively

confined to the commemoration of departed worth. In the present instance, the person who is presented to notice, is, we hope, still living, and persevering in his useful and benevolent plans.

The subject of education is increasingly interesting, and doubtless much public benefit has been derived from those establishments

for the education of the poor, which are extending so widely through different parts of Ireland; every facility is now given to the instruction of the poor, as by means of the economical plans which have been lately adopted, it is calculated, that in the expense of school-houses, school-masters and mistresses, the three principal articles, the Lancasterian scheme is twenty-three times less expensive than charity-schools. By means of the strict system of discipline adopted in Lancasterian schools, the propensities to crime are also, in some degree, checked, and the moral character of the poor improved.*

Reform in the education of the poor having so far proved successful, some reformation was thought requisite in regard to the education of the opulent and middling classes. Henry Pestalozzi, a native of Switzerland, first led the way, and his

* It is stated as a cheering and delightful fact, that of the several thousands of children who have been trained in the Lancasterian school in the Borough-road, not one is known to have been charged in a court of justice with a crime. In favour of the important benefits of education, it may also be mentioned, that Mr. Highmore, in his *Pietas Londonensis*, in reference to the children taught in a number of charity-schools in London, says, "It must be a great satisfaction to those who have engaged in this charitable and useful design, that out of so great a number of children as have been thus educated, there is but one instance that any of them have been convicted of any crime; and that person being transported, was so far influenced by his first education, that he was so thoroughly reclaimed that he became a very industrious and sober man, and is so sensible of the benefit of his education, that being in good circumstances, he is an annual contributor to the school where he was educated."

And yet we have our Windhams, who say, that reading is a dangerous faculty in the poor; and our Dr. Bells, who say, that to teach the poor to write and cast accounts, is Utopian, and lifts their minds above their situation.

system of instruction has excited considerable attention on the Continent, for some years past. Innumerable publications have issued from the German press, both for and against the particular merits of his alleged discovery. Like all such subjects of controversy, the advantages and defects of his mode of education have been mutually overrated and concealed, and it is now left to be appreciated by the fair test of time and experience. After removing from place to place, and encountering various difficulties and persecutions, Pestalozzi was, in 1807, settled at the pleasant town of Yverdon, in the Pays de Vaud, whither he removed from Buchsée, in the canton of Bern. The government of the canton of Vaud has allowed him to take the *chateau*, formerly the residence of the bailiff, for his school, and he there hopes to realize his favourite schemes for improving the education of his countrymen. Pestalozzi is one of those self-taught men endowed with extraordinary genius, whose vast designs and projects dazzle and confound the judgments of their contemporaries. His object is to teach children by *intuition*, or bringing the subject to be taught to be an object of sight to the pupil: for this personal observation is looked upon as the foundation of all our knowledge, and the best mode of developing the powers of the mind in the most natural way. It consists in forming the child's judgment by addressing the sense of sight, and by beginning with the most simple and intelligible objects gradually to advance to those which are more complicated, yet have some relation with those already learned.

Henry Pestalozzi is the son of a surgeon-apothecary, and was born at Zurich, in 1746. His father died when he was between four and

five years old, and his early education was superintended by his mother and one female servant. Having but little intercourse with any body out of his own house, he seldom met with children of his own age, and partook very little of their amusements. He thus grew up almost wholly deprived of favourable opportunities for acquiring the manners and knowledge of the world, by frequent converse with persons of different conditions in life. This mode of living naturally rendered him ignorant and careless of external appearances; and his neglect of his person has often injured him in the opinion of those who judged only by his exterior. However, from his earliest years he directed his attention to literary pursuits. He had the good fortune to study under several celebrated men at Zurich, when freedom of inquiry, a patriotic love of liberty, and of the fine arts, shone forth there in full splendour; but the knowledge which he then acquired was not calculated to supply the defects of his education at home. He showed a decided inclination for an active life, and when he was seventeen he quitted his studies with the intention of devoting himself to the bar, but the death of an intimate friend, who was to have been his guide, induced him to renounce this plan, and to turn his attention to agriculture. He wished to become an advocate, in order that he might afford more effectual assistance to the degraded and neglected peasantry, by having his interference in their behalf regulated by a knowledge of the laws; and it was the desire of helping the same people in the same way, by having a thorough knowledge of their real situation and absolute wants, which led him to become a farmer. In consequence of this determination he purchased a large

tract of land, in partnership with one of the first mercantile houses in Zurich. At the very time he was about to commence his operations, this house separated from him, and he found himself left to his own resources. He did not suffer himself to be disheartened by this disappointment, but carried on his project with great spirit, and in 1775 he joins to it an attempt to educate the children of the poor. This new scheme, however, did not succeed.

In one of his letters to his friend Gessner, he says, "I lived for years in the midst of a circle of upwards of fifty children, whose parents were in the greatest misery. In my poverty I shared my bread with them; I lived myself like a beggar, in order to teach beggars to live like men. My idea of the kind of education which I ought to give them, comprehended agriculture, manufactures, and trade. I was fully satisfied with the efficiency of the plan I had formed, and I really still do not think I am mistaken; but it is not less true that I was deficient in the knowledge of detail in these three branches, and I wanted a mind capable of attending to minutiae, which are inseparable from such a plan; besides, I was not sufficiently rich, and I was too destitute to be able to obtain the necessary supplies. My enterprise miscarried; but amidst the inexpressible efforts which I made, I learnt innumerable truths, and I was never more firmly convinced of the goodness of my project, than when I found myself obliged to abandon it."

The check which this first attempt met with, plunged Pestalozzi into great distress; but his mind rose above his misfortunes, and he resolved to point out and to remedy the source of the misery among the lower orders of people, which he had become better acquainted with than

any body else. With this view he published several books, of which the first was a popular novel called, "Leonard and Gertrude," which produced very great effect. It contains a history of the mode of life among the Swiss peasantry, and shows the ill consequences of vice, and the advantages of industrious and virtuous habits. In 1782 he published "Christopher and Else;" afterwards an Helvetic address to the inhabitants of the country. In the following year he wrote a treatise on the criminal code, and particularly upon infanticide; and in 1797 he published the beginning of his "Inquiries in the Natural Progress of the Development of the Faculties of Man." He was obliged to contract the sphere of his exertions, but never lost sight of the great object of his life. At length he resolved to become a school-master: he began his labours in this capacity at Stanz, in 1798, but the troubles of the revolution and the horrors of war which broke out in the little cantons compelled him to relinquish this situation. The Helvetic government interested itself in the fate of his new institution at Berthoud and its founder, and a report highly favourable to the establishment was presented to the diet. A pension was granted to Pestalozzi, and promises of support, besides giving him an exclusive privilege of printing his elementary books. After the Helvetic government was overturned, the acts of those enlightened patriots were disregarded, and the deputies sent to the diet received no more instruction about the institution at Berthoud. Surrounded by several distinguished teachers, Pestalozzi deemed it prudent to divide the school; to take one half of the scholars to Yverdun, and to leave the rest under the superintendence of some able assistants at Buchsée. He does not seek to en-

rich himself, for whatever money he gets, he spends it in clothing and maintaining orphans and poor children. At one time he had one hundred and ten scholars, most of whom were orphans and children abandoned by their parents, whom he had collected together, whilst the rest paid him very badly, or at least in a very irregular manner.

"In the month of June, 1803," says a gentleman who spent many years on the continent, "I visited the school at Yverdun, and was present at an examination of some of the scholars. Five boys were called from their play, and were exercised and examined by one of the senior scholars, and one of the teachers, in a variety of arithmetical, algebraical, and mathematical questions, on purpose to satisfy my curiosity as a stranger. They answered all the questions which were put to them with great accuracy, and were not puzzled with questions, not very easy of solution, which were asked by indifferent persons. One of them, a fine looking boy, between seven and eight years old, resolved several complicated problems with the sagacity and correctness of a college student. They answered these questions by working the whole of the numerical relations in their own minds, without the help of pen and ink, or pencil, or any cyphers; but in those which were the most complicated, they referred to tables with lines and points dotted on them, which are employed to show the relations of different quantities. The advantages of this method seem to consist in the use of analysis, by habituating the mind to analyse and trace the series of consequences in any given process, and to refer all the ideas of relation to the impressions made by the sense of sight. It also may serve to increase the power of attention, and to lead young people

to attend to sensible objects, rather than to abstract notions. For all those studies which depend chiefly upon the sensations of sight it seems well adapted : as for instance, drawing and design. To this department it has been applied, and some specimens were exhibited which did credit to the pupils. They are first taught to draw straight lines, and to represent crystals of different forms, and then to draw from the skeleton and human subject. The bones of the arm, pelvis, and jaw, were well drawn with a pencil, and portraits of two school-fellows neatly executed.

"Pestalozzi intends to apply the same mode for teaching geography, natural history, and other sciences : he considers his plan still in its infancy. His scholars are taught the languages and writing in the usual way ; they speak both German and French. The boarders pay £2.25 per annum. No corporal punishment is allowed. The boys are all much attached to their masters, and the school appears to be upon a very good footing."

Those who are anxious to inquire farther into the detail of Pestalozzi's plan, may satisfy their curiosity by reading a book entitled, "*Exposé de la Méthode Elémentaire de H. Pestalozzi, par D. A. Chavannes, M.D. à Vevey, 1805 ;*" or by referring to the "*Jena Zeitung*," and especially to one of Pestalozzi's works, called, "*Wie Gertrude ihre Kiuder lehrt, &c.*"*

Pestalozzi having turned public attention to an improved method of instruction, in which there is some resemblance to the Lancasterian plan, the teachers in some of the principal Academies in London, have

introduced the interrogative system of education with much success. In order to explain more fully in what particular respects the interrogative system differs from that in general use, we take the liberty of giving the following quotation from a writer in Philips's Magazine.

"The various modern improvements in the practice of teaching youth, may perhaps be enumerated under the five following heads :

"1. The introduction of systems of *rewards* in place of corporal and disgraceful punishments.

"2. An attention to objects purely mental in the education of *girls*.

"3. The introduction of the *interrogative system*, or of questions without answers, by which the irksome mechanical drudgery of learning by rote is in great measure avoided, and the thinking powers of the student brought *into action*, and *into contact* with the object of study.

"4. The introduction of concise *elementary books* combined with that interrogative and exercise system.

"5. The consequent *extension* of the objects of juvenile study, by which scholastic instruction has been rendered more *liberal* and *intellectual* than formerly.

"The first and second of these heads have been so successfully treated by writers from Locke to Edgeworth, that nothing need be added in this place.

"The third head, relative to the *Interrogative System*, is now very generally understood. What had long been done in teaching the dead languages and arithmetic, is now effected in like manner in regard to other practical objects of liberal study. Thus the elements of religion are pleasantly taught, and indelibly acquired, by means of Barrow's Questions on the New Testament ; the events in English History,

* For many of the particulars in this interesting account, we are indebted to the *Athenæum*, vol. II. page 329.

their causes and consequences, by Adair's Questions on Goldsmith's England; the Elements of Universal Knowledge, by means of the questions on Blair's excellent Preceptor; and the principles of English Grammar and Composition, by Adair's Questions on Murray and Irving. The slightest attention to this system will render the value of those books of questions self-evident. While it is equally plain, that, without such aids, the same subjects could never be made to reach the minds of children. It is indeed notorious, that after bestowing as many years, as it is now necessary to employ months, children have usually left school in a state of total ignorance, overcome by listlessness, and filled with disgust at the sight of their books. But, if interested by pertinent questions, amused by searching for answers, and excited to emulation by contests for merit in framing answers, they will have been gratified, instead of being tortured, by their studies; and their minds will have assumed an intellectual energy and ardour, which, on such subjects, belong to the age of maturity, rather than to the period of childhood."

In the interrogative system, answers are not annexed to the questions, but the pupil, on being asked the question, applies to the book to which he is referred, and an attentive perusal enables him to answer the questions with accuracy: the knowledge he has thus been at the trouble of acquiring, will be more permanently fixed in his memory, than if his teacher had compelled him to learn questions and answers by rote. In one respect, the Interrogative system is decidedly superior

to the Lancasterian system, as it is well calculated to prevent children from having more the appearance than the reality of knowledge: it is directly opposite to superficial.

Having thus given a hasty sketch of these important improvements in education, we shall conclude our remarks in the energetic words of the writer in Philips's Monthly Magazine, already mentioned.

"Better systems of education may be discovered, and better books may also be compiled, than those now in use. Yet much has been done within these few years, to render the next an ENLIGHTENED and PHILOSOPHICAL AGE; to qualify the mass of our future population, to be able to distinguish between truth and error; consequently to protect them against the delusions of corruption and the influence of bad passions. And, as KNOWLEDGE IS VIRTUE, AND VIRTUE IS HAPPINESS, the effects may, perhaps, in some degree, realise the dreams of the millenarians, and the poetic fables descriptive of a golden age. At any rate, the prospect is cheering to the philanthropist, who, in the present generation, has been doomed to witness the ascendancy of folly, prejudice, and superstition; and to see the mass of the people become the dupes of knaves and fools. The best hope of philosophy and patriotism is the better instruction of the whole population; while the best security of wise, virtuous, and paternal governments are, the cultivated faculties of the people, enabling them to distinguish between law and oppression, liberty and anarchy, protection and despotism; and, from the condition of other countries, to draw comparisons favourable to their own!"